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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/563,096	05/30/2006	Martin Hasch	3826 1071US	4568
29894 7590 06/12/2007 DREISS, FUHLENDORF, STEIMLE & BECKER POSTFACH 10 37 62 D-70032 STUTTGART, GERMANY			EXAMINER FISHMAN, MARINA	
			ART UNIT 2832	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 06/12/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/563,096	Applicant(s) HASCH ET AL.	
	Examiner Marina Fishman	Art Unit 2832	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 May 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 12-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 12-15 and 19-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16-18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/30/2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

General status

1. This is a First Action on the Merits. Claims 12 - 22 are pending in the case and are being examined.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 12 – 15 and 19 – 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Otani et al. [US 2003/0075422].

Otani et al. discloses a steering column module [1] for a vehicle or for a motor-vehicle, the module comprising:

- a base housing [47];
- a switching unit [19] disposed on or in the base housing the switching unit having a mechanism [21] coupled to a moving member [67, Figure 3];
- at least one circuit board [63] disposed in the base housing [19, Figure 2];

- at least one contact switch [107] mounted for motion on the circuit board and coupled for cooperation with the mechanism of the switching unit, wherein the circuit board and the contact switch belong to a common, pre-assembled unit [3], the unit being configured in such a fashion that coupling for motion between the contact switch and the mechanism of the switching unit transpires during assembly of the switching unit to the pre-assembled unit.

Regarding Claim 13, at least portions of the base housing [47] belong to the pre-assembled unit and regarding Claim 14, the pre-assembled unit has housing sections [casing of 3], which cover at least portions of the circuit board. Note that base housing has resilient fingers (Figure 1, not numbered) used to assemble the base housing with the casing of the pre-assembled unit; a slot is visible in Figure 1, which receives a portion of the base housing. Regarding Claim 15, the module further comprising securing means (resilient fingers and slot) disposed on the pre-assembled unit to secure a position of the contact switch. Regarding Claim 19, the resilient fingers and the slot in the pre-assembled unit forms an alignment means, which forms a centering means for common mutual alignment during assembly. Regarding Claim 20, wherein the contact switch has a central receptacle [95], which cooperates with a free end of a lever arm [33] of the mechanism during assembly. Regarding Claim 21, wherein the switching unit has a switching housing [91], which can be disposed on the base housing. Regarding Claim 22, in a final mounted state, plurality of the switching

Art Unit: 2832

units [67, 45, 71] are disposed in corresponding switching housings on the pre-assembled unit.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 16 - 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Onoda et al. [US 7,180,020], Rudolph et al. [US 6,891,115], Otani [US 6,872,897], Stadler et al. [US 6,225,582], Sano [US 6,222,142], Otani et al. [US 2005/0087431] all disclose steering wheel switches. Applicant also should consider these references in response to this office action. Should issue arise concerning the rejection presented above, these references may be relied upon in a subsequent action to support the lack of novelty or obviousness of claimed subject matter to one of ordinary skill in the art.


7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marina Fishman whose telephone number is 571-272-1991. The examiner can normally be reached on 7-5 M-T.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Elvin Enad can be reached on 571-272-1990. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2832

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Marina Fishman
June 4, 2007


ELVIN ENAD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
09 JUN 2007